

**Town of Stratham
Town Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2011**

The ballot clerks were sworn in at 7:55 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Present were Moderator Dave Emanuel, Assistant Moderator Jerry Howard, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau, Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Catherine Kenny, and Town Administrator Paul Deschaine. Also present were Selectman David Canada, Timothy Copeland, and later that day, Selectman Bruno Federico. The Supervisors of the Checklist present were Susan Hunter, Melanie McGrail, and later that day Caren Gallagher. The ballot clerks for the day were Nancy Hunter, Susan Canada, Diana Thompson, Roger Thompson, Susan Brett, Peg Mullin, Murray Segal, Liz Chisholm, Andra Copeland, and Pat Sapienza. Head ballot clerk Annemarie Peck was present all day.

**Exeter Region Cooperative School District Ballot results for Stratham only are as follows:
(* = Denotes the Winner)**

Cooperative School Board: for East Kingston for three years, vote for one: David G. Miller 507*. For Exeter for three years, vote for one: Kate Segal 513*. For Kensington for two years, vote for one: Joni Reynolds 496*. For Stratham for three years, vote for one: Mark Portu 586*. Cooperative School District Moderator for one year, vote for one: Charles F. Tucker 570*. Cooperative School District Budget Committee: for Brentwood for three years, vote for one: Elyse Gallo Seeley 491*. For Exeter for three years, vote for one: Roy E. Morrisette 540*. For Kensington for three years, vote for one: Janice Miller 498*.

Article 1:

Cooperative Budget: Yes 482* No 223

Article 2:

Salaries and Benefits for Staff: Yes 171 No 541*

Article 3:

Maintenance Trust Fund Surplus: Yes 506* No 201

**Stratham Memorial School District Ballot Results are as follows:
(* = Denotes the Winner)**

School Board Member for three years, vote for two: Robert O'Sullivan 563*. (There was not a second candidate on the ballot, but there were 332* write in votes for Mark Sykas, 81 write in votes for Lauren Byrnes, and 18 write in votes for Bill Thompson.)

**Annual Town of Stratham Ballot results as follows:
(* = Denotes the Winner)**

It was a steady day with 791 votes cast for the Town Election, with 24 of those being absentee ballots. The Stratham vote is as follows:

Article 1:

Town Clerk/Tax Collector for three years, vote for one: Joyce L. Charbonneau 727*. Treasurer for three years, vote for one: Kevin J. Peck: 682*, Selectman for three years, vote for one: David Canada 645*. Trustee of the Trust Funds for three years, vote for one: Maria Emanuel 663*. Cemetery Trustee for three years, vote for one: Robert A. Cushman 662*. Library Trustee for three years, vote for one: Bruce Cotter 665*.

Article 2:

To amend the Zoning ordinance, Section II. Definitions, Subsection 2.1.70 Structure and insert new subsection, Subsection 2.1.79 Yard Sale in order to further clarify and define said terms. Yes 597* No 154

Article 3:

To amend the Zoning Ordinance in its entirety in order to revise/update all Tax Map and Parcel numbers and references to correspond with the 2010 Tax Map conversion. Yes 637* No 115

Article 4:

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section 2. Definitions, Section 3.8 Gateway Commercial Business District, and Section 7. Signs to further define and clarify the types and signs and design standards for signage within the Gateway Commercial Business District. And in connection therewith, amend Sections 7.2.2 Sign Permits and 7.2.3 Prohibited Signs by adding the appropriate references to the Gateway Commercial Business District overlay. Yes 588* No 162

Article 5:

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section XI. Wetlands Conservation District, Section 12.4.3, and 18.7 Water Courses in conformance with the New Hampshire Statutes Annotated RSA 482-A, New Hampshire code of Administrative Rules, Section Env-Wt 301, and related text changes for clarification and consistency. Yes 621* No 120

Article 6:

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section 17.8.3 Variances to conform to the revised New Hampshire Statutes Annotated, RSA 674:33 and to eliminate the distinction between a “use” or “area” variance. Yes 606* No 127

Article 7

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section 15 Growth Management & Innovative Land Use Control to conform to the New Hampshire Statutes Annotated RSA 674:22 to include a sunset or defined termination date. Yes 604* No 126

Article 8:

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section 3.6 Table of Uses, D. Agricultural/ Forestry Uses in conformance with the New Hampshire Statutes Annotated RSA 674:32-c allowing farming uses in all zoning districts. Yes 628* No 107

Article 9:

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Official Zoning Map of the Town of Stratham pursuant to Section 3.2 to rezone Map 17, Lot 87 (commonly known as 166 Portsmouth Avenue) from its current zoning designation of Residential/ Agricultural (R/A) to the Town Center District (TC), (as proposed by Robert and Barbara McLaughlin and 23 other registered voters). Yes 525* No 208

The remaining Town of Stratham articles will be voted on Friday, March 11, 2011 at the Stratham Memorial School at 7:00 p.m.

Town Moderator Dave Emanuel declared the meeting to come to order at 7:06 p.m. Lucy Cushman led the Pledge of Allegiance. Dave introduced everyone on the stage; the Selectmen; Tim Copeland, David Canada, and Bruno Federico, the Town Administrator; Paul Deschaine, and the Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Joyce Charbonneau. Also introduced was Jerry Howard, Assistant Moderator. Dave indicated that the Supervisors of the Checklist were to the left of the stage, and the Assistant Clerks were to the right of the stage. Dave then called for a moment of silence for all those serving in the Armed Forces, and for those that could not be there tonight. Assistant Moderator Jerry Howard read the Dedication of the Town Report to John and Pat Sapienza. Dave Emanuel then read the Memorial Page for Caroline Robinson and Joseph Derwiecki. Dave then read the results of the ballot voting on Tuesday, March 8, 2011. He then explained the Rules of Procedure for Town Meeting.

The following articles were discussed and voted on:

Article 10: Conservation Bond Authority

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of Six Hundred Eighty Five thousand dollars (\$685,000.00) for the acquisition of conservation easements or open space lands by the Town, all for the permanent protection of appropriate undeveloped land in the Town of Stratham, and to authorize the Selectmen and Conservation Commission to act on behalf of the Town in connection with such acquisitions of conservation easements or open space lands pursuant to NH RSA 36-A, and to further authorize the issuance of not more than Six Hundred Eighty Five Thousand Dollars (\$685,000.00) of bonds and/or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (NH RSA Chapter 33), and to authorize the Selectmen

to issue, negotiate, and regulate such bonds, and/or notes and to determine the rates of interest thereon.

A two thirds (2/3) majority ballot vote in favor is required for passage. Polls must be open for a minimum of one (1) hour.

The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a unanimous vote. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Tim Copeland spoke for the motion. He stated that in 2002 at the Town Meeting, the residents allocated five million dollars to buy open space conservation land. Property and easements have been bought since the allocation of these funds; examples of the properties purchased are the Jones/Zarnowski properties. The town also applied for a grant through the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program and received a grant for Six Hundred Eighty Five Thousand Dollars (\$685,000.00) for the Jones Conservation Easement. In receiving that grant, the bond counsel did not recognize the \$685,000.00 as a credit against the original bonding authority. They were just looking at the five million dollars authorized. The Selectmen did not realize this until this year, when they went to purchase other property, and the bond counsel notified the town that they already exceeded our bonding authority. The Selectmen are asking for the reauthorization of the \$685,000.00 to be returned to the original five million dollar bond to its original value in order to give us the opportunity, should it arise, to purchase more open land and conservation property. Dave Emanuel then asked for questions from the floor. Roger Stephenson, 22 Stephen Dr. stated that he supported this article. He read a letter from Mark Sykus who served with distinction on the Ad Hoc Land Conservation Bond Committee and continues to serve on various committees here in Stratham. The letter was then read: To fellow citizens attending Stratham Town Meeting, during the time I served on the Ad Hoc Committee, which was impaneled to identify suitable land for preservation. Town Leaders have recently learned that an inadvertent mistake threatens to cut total bond authority by \$685,000.00 from five million dollars that was authorized by 88% of the voters in 2002 to four million three hundred fifteen thousand dollars. Tonight you are being asked to restore the complete five million dollars. It is no additional money. I also want to thank the voters of Stratham for their vision in 2002. To date, with your help, and the town leaders, we have steered almost two million dollars of outside money towards land protection that supplements the five million dollars that you authorized, and we have protected about five hundred acres and ten parcels throughout the town so far. We have made good use of the money. There are several hundred house lots that have not been built because of your vision in 2002, and with your support, and a reminder, we do need a two-thirds (2/3) majority to pass this. I encourage passage of this article. Mr. Stephenson thus finished the letter, thanked everyone, and sat down. Pat Elwell, 6 Strawberry Lane, also endorsed this article. She stated she is the Chair for the Conservation Commission. Pat went on to praise the Ad Hoc Committee for their hard work over the years. They have worked hard, and virtually have doubled the money that was given to the Conservation Committee. Pat stated that they still have landowners that are waiting in line to have their properties reviewed. Pat explained they got the \$685,000.00 back from the Farm and Ranchland Protection Grant, and they are just asking for that money to be included in our bond fund money authorized. The bond counsel did not recognize the Conservation Commission getting back the grant money, so they will not give the Commission the full value of the five million dollar bond authorized. Pat asked that you please support this article that you already authorized in 2002. Marty Wool, Winnicutt

Rd. asked where is the money now. Paul Deschaine explained when we acquired the Farm and Ranchland Protection Grant; the bank that issued the bond anticipation note got the \$685,000.00. We were under the mistaken impression that it would not affect our bonding authority. David Canada further explained we borrowed a short-term note to pay for the Jones/Zarnowski properties. We paid off these short-term notes with a bond and the grant money. The bond counsel now states when we took out the short-term notes; we were using up our bonding authority. Chuck Hayes from Portsmouth Ave. asked if this passes, what is the total expenditure. David Canada explained the local tax raised amount is five million dollars. The total spent will be around seven million dollars with any other grants we get. Bruno Federico explained the bond counsel does not recognize grants coming back in. Gordon Bailey, Holmgren Court, asked about the wording in the article, and questioned the "raise and appropriate" part. Paul Deschaine explained you are "raising and appropriating" by restoring the five million dollar bond to its original value of five million dollars. Roger Stephenson further explained that this will give us back the authority to borrow should we have a piece of land that is worthy of purchase. As each property comes into play, we are required, since 2002, to bring each property to the Board of Selectmen to a public hearing for a final vote. This is when the authority turns into the expenditure. Each parcel of land goes before the voters on its own merits via a public hearing and this vote tonight will restore the five million dollar bond authority that was passed in 2002. Frank Lasorsa from Brown Ave. asked how many people will we eliminate by taking away this land from development. He asked how many future volunteer firefighters, how many future good citizens will we eliminate by buying up this property for open space and conservation. Pat Elwell stated we would eliminate huge amounts of taxes because the people that we will eliminate by putting land into conservation generally come in with children, which we need to pay taxes for the schools that they go to. This was one of the big selling points for this bond money; keeping the taxes lower in our community. Pat then asked to move the vote. Moderator Dave Emanuel stated there being no other people at the microphone, we would move to vote on article 10. Mr. Emanuel explained that this is a ballot vote, and instructed A- K will check in with the Supervisor of the Check List Sue Hunter on the left side of the room, and L-Z will check in with the Supervisor of the Check List Caren Gallagher on the right side of the room. The polls will be open for one hour, and the time is 7:47 p.m. Dave stated to return your ballot center stage where a locked ballot box is set up and manned by assistant moderator Jerry Howard and Treasurer Kevin Peck. Dave Emanuel stated we will continue to conduct business while the polls remain open for article 10 until 8:47 p.m. At 8:45 p.m., Moderator Emanuel gave a two-minute warning, and called for a final vote before closing the polls. Seeing no further action to check in and cast a ballot, the moderator closed the polls at 8:47 p.m. and ordered Jerry Howard, the Assistant Moderator, to count the votes and present the returns. (Moderator Dave Emanuel later announced the results of the vote, and article 10 did pass by two-thirds: 116 Yes 58 No.)

Article 11: Budget

To see if the town will raise and appropriate Five Million One Hundred Twenty Four Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety One Dollars and no cents, (\$5,124,991.00) to defray general town charges for the ensuing year. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by a unanimous vote. Selectman David Canada moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Selectman David Canada spoke to the motion. David reviewed the budget and pointed out several valid points on the budget. Each \$100,000.00 we raise will add eight

point three cents (8.3 cents) to the tax rate. Put another way, raising \$12,000.00, will add one cent (1cent) to the tax rate. The Selectmen and the Budget Committee go through the budget line by line to come up with the final recommendations. If everything on the warrants passes, it will raise our taxes by twelve cents (.12 cents). The changes in the budget are the following: Computer Services, which went from \$26,000.00 for 2010 to \$48,000.00 for 2011. Employee benefits are up \$28,000.00 or 1.2%, and the reason for that are the NH Retirement System, and the Unemployment Insurance rates. The Police budget is up \$18,000.00 or 2.1% and the reasons for that are additional payroll costs, and the increase costs of gasoline. Dispatch services are down 76%, and the reason for that is we changed dispatch services from Newmarket Dispatch to Rockingham County Dispatch. Highway is down 5%, and some of that will be going over towards the Recreation Department. The Recreation Department will be taking over the responsibility of the mowing at Stevens Field. Money was also saved on salt this year, and that was due to the mild winter of 2009. We started 2010 with a large inventory of salt. Mr. Canada also mentioned that the interest on bond anticipation notes is due. Another increase is the cost of extending veteran's exemptions. Overall, we are looking at a \$7800.00 increase or a .3 percent increase. Dave Emanuel then asked for questions from the floor. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. commended the Selectmen for the dispatch service change. Nancy Hunter, 2 Brown Ave. asked about the Recreation Department's line. There is a \$20,000.00 surplus left over from last year, and she asked where that amount is going. Paul Deschaine responded that any amount that is not spent is turned back in to reduce taxes. She also asked about line four in the budget, for the Public Works Commission; \$64,000.00 is being proposed, is that going towards the Gateway and water studies. Mr. Deschaine responded in the affirmative. With no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and article 11 passed.

Article 12: CIP

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Nine Hundred Fifty Six Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$956,000.00) to implement the Capital Improvements Program for 2011 as presented in the Town Report and approved by the Planning Board. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by a unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman David Canada seconded the motion; Selectman Federico spoke to the motion, and reviewed the CIP. Moderator Emanuel asked for questions or comments from the floor. Nancy Hunter, Brown Ave. asked about the \$25,000.00 for the Recreation Department and wanted a reassurance that this money would not just be used for the Babe Ruth Field. Selectman David Canada stated this money is going towards a softball field. Nancy was happy to hear that, and thanked Mr. Canada. Kirk Scamman, 9 Frying Pan Lane asked about the \$50,000.00 for a highway vehicle under Public Works. Mr. Scamman asked what kind of vehicle was needed. Selectman Canada responded that it was not for a particular vehicle at this time. This money is to establish a fund so that the town can buy trucks when it is necessary to do so. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. commented on the number of mailboxes that were damaged this winter due to plowing from the Highway Department. He also made the comment on keeping the Highway Department vehicles in top-notch condition, and replacing them right away if needed. Dave Emanuel then asked for any more questions or comments on

article 12, the CIP, and seeing none, Dave read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and article 12 passed.

Article 13: Foss Property

To see if the town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to purchase on behalf of the town the property of David and Virginia Foss at 28 Bunker Hill Avenue, (Tax Map 9, Lot 51) and to further raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred and Fifty Five Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$355,000.00) to fund this purchase. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by unanimous vote. Selectman David Canada moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman Canada spoke to the motion. Mr. Canada explained that the Board of Selectmen and the Public Works Commission has worked hard over the last several years to define what Stratham needs, and what Stratham wants in terms of utility infrastructure. Without providing sewer and water, and storm water management to our commercial district, it will remain a series of uninspired strip malls. Mr. Canada also stated that our tax burden, if we do not increase the commercial part of the town, will become more and more a burden on our residents. All water systems rely on elevated tanks to maintain pressure. The Selectmen feel that the Foss property is the ideal location. It is in the center of the Commercial District. It is the exact right height, and it will be a ground level tank. The tank will be hidden by existing mature trees that are up there. While it is true that we are not ready for a tank this year, the Selectmen hope that by next year they can show you the path, show what we need, how we are going to get it there, and how we are going to fund it. The last time this property went on the market was 1954. There is no reassurance that this property will become available at the exact time that we need it. Selectman Canada then showed some pictures to the residents at town meeting. The pictures showed what the water tank would look like on the Foss property. The tower would be about thirty-five feet. We would be saving about four to five hundred thousand dollars if we put the tank on the existing Foss property. This includes the price of the Foss property. This would be a cement tank, and it would be virtually maintenance free. Mr. Canada then called upon John Boisvert, who is the chairman for the Public Works Commission to explain further the benefits of a ground water tank. John Boisvert, 58 Winnicutt Rd. explained that one of the reasons the water tower is necessary is for fire protection. This tank will serve that public protection aspect within the Gateway and the commercial district. Another provision that the tank will do is provide water to businesses that are within the Gateway. A few important points for the ground level water tank that the Foss Property will provide versus the pedestal tank that would go behind the Municipal building is the cost of ongoing operations and maintenance of the pedestal tank. The pedestal tank would have to be repainted every fifteen years at a cost of \$250,000.00 to \$400,000.00. The ground level tank's cost would be the initial construction of it, and then you could forget about it. There is virtually no maintenance to the ground level water tank. The Foss property is the only location that is high enough and close enough to the Gateway District that is available in town right now. The property will hide the tank nicely with the trees that are already there. The other valid point is whether we do work with a neighboring town or not, we would still need this water tank. We have an opportunity to purchase this land now. David Bronson, Vanessa Lane, asked about the easement. Will we have access to this property? Mr. Canada responded that the Kathleen Foss

property that is being developed by Mr. Saidla, and that surrounds the Foss property that is being discussed for purchase tonight would not be a problem with an easement with the town. Mr. Bronson asked if it would make sense to have an easement in place before we purchase the property. Mr. Canada responded that Mr. Saidla is a very reputable man, and is good for his word. A decision needs to be made tonight, so it is too late now, and the Selectmen feel good with the assurances they received from Mr. Saidla. Gordon Snyder, Winding Brook, asked if the piece that is being considered is just one piece of the entire property. Mr. Canada responded it is the entire lot that belongs to David and Virginia Foss, about two acres. Mr. Snyder also asked if the property has frontage on Bunker Hill. Mr. Canada responded we have right of way to Bunker Hill. Roger Stephenson, Stephen Dr. asked if there would be any zoning changes after the tank is constructed because of the anticipation of an increase in the Business district with the availability of water. Mr. Canada responded that there would be no zoning requirements to put a tank on the site. Mr. Stephenson asked if the right of way is part of the purchase agreement. Mr. Canada responded in the affirmative. David Foss, 28 Bunker Hill Ave. stated that he received a call from Mr. Saidla's financial partner wishing them luck with the vote, and stated they are very much behind this purchase. Gary Dolan, 15 Jana Lane, stated this is a unique opportunity for the town to plan for the future, and it is very reasonably priced, and accomplishes a lot for the people in town, and future businesses and protection of property in terms of fire protection for the Commercial District. This is a magnificent opportunity that will only come along once. He stated that tonight is the opportunity, and to take it. Julia Cashman, Humes Court, asked if there are any buildings on the property, and if so, will they be torn down. If not, will there be maintenance on the buildings? Mr. Canada responded that the Foss house is on the property, and there are no plans to tear it down. The plan is to rent the house, and that should cover the maintenance costs. Once the tank is built, the plan is for the town to sell the house. Mike Nugent, Fryng Pan Lane, asked if the Foss property was appraised. Mr. Canada responded that it was not appraised. The town assessment on it was about \$349,000.00, Nancy Hunter, 2 Brown Ave. asked why they did not purchase the thirty-five acres from the entire Foss property when the opportunity arose. Now these acres are going to be subdivided, why can't we take lot 13 that is not buildable for a house lot and place the tank there. Mr. Canada responded that we need the height of the hill. Mrs. Hunter answered that we have the height of the hill on lot 13. Murray Segal, 50 Depot Rd. thanked the Selectmen for the good job they have done in managing their money these last few years. Mr. Segal asked about the plan for the Gateway District. He had several questions about the traffic plan, utilities, and the tax revenue. Mr. Canada responded that these questions cannot be answered at this time. This is a long process, and getting the water tank in place is part of the process to continue the plan for the Gateway District. Pat Abrami, 9 Tall Pines Dr. asked if we are going to eventually turn this property into a water/sewage district that would end up reimbursing the town. John Boisvert responded that it is the hope that the people that end up benefitting from the service, i.e., the Gateway, or the Commercial District will bear the burden of paying for those services. This is what the Public Works Commission is working on and starting to explore. Paul Deschaine also commented about the studies on this issue, but they are just planning level studies at this point, and they are available on the website. All of the studies that have been done up to today still indicates that this is a good idea. Jay Tischler, 66 High St. asked do we have a source of water to fill the tank. Mr. Deschaine responded that there are sources; they just have not been identified to date. Mr. Tischler also asked how would the purchase be financed. Mr. Deschaine responded it would be paid directly from taxes. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd., Jeff Wilson, Willow brook Ave., and Matt Freese,

Bunker Hill Ave., all spoke against the motion. Selectman Tim Copeland, Selectman David Canada, Town Administrator Paul Deschaine, Chairman for the Public Works John Boisvert and Chairperson for the Conservation Committee Pat Elwell reiterated their arguments for this article. Pat Elwell made a motion to move the vote. Matt Freese then asked for a written ballot. Moderator Dave Emanuel explained to Matt he would need a written petition with five registered voters on the petition. Gary Dolan asked for clarification about the written ballot, since the request to move the vote was before the request for the written ballot. Mr. Emanuel explained that he recognized Mr. Freese to speak after the request to move the vote, so he will honor Mr. Freese's request for a written ballot. Mr. Emanuel received the written petition with the five registered voters. They are Matt Freese, Mike Nugent, Charles Hayes, Joe Mastin, and Lawrence Foss. John Sapienza, Raeder Dr. asked to back up Gary's comment. He feels there is a procedural problem as far as the request for the written ballot that was made when there was already a motion to move the vote. He asked the Moderator to address it. Mr. Emanuel responded again that Mr. Freese was on the floor at the time Pat Elwell made the motion to move the vote, and that he recognized him to speak. He also told Mr. Sapienza to refer to the Procedural Rule #1, and that is the Moderator makes the rules. Mr. Emanuel explained the polls do not have to be open for an hour for this vote, just long enough so everyone has a chance to vote. Mr. Emanuel read the vote, and directed the voters to the appropriate side of the room in the same way that article 10's vote was divided. (Once everyone had the chance to vote, and the votes were counted, Moderator Dave Emanuel announced the results, and article 13 did pass: 98 Yes 65 No).

Article 14: Cemetery Land Fund

Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 31:95c to restrict One Hundred Percent (100%) of revenues from the sale of cemetery lots to expenditures for the purpose of purchasing and/or improving land for public cemetery uses? Such revenues and expenditures shall be accounted for in a special revenue fund to be known as the Cemetery Land Fund, separate from the general fund. Any surplus in said fund shall not be deemed part of the general fund accumulated surplus and shall be expended only after a vote by the legislative body to appropriate a specific amount from said fund for a specific purpose related to the purpose of the fund or source of the revenue. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke for the motion. He stated that the sale of the town cemetery lots sell for \$500.00 per lot, and of that \$500.00, \$12.00 goes towards the recording fees, and \$88.00 goes for the actual sale of the lot, and the remaining \$400.00 goes towards perpetual care. The selectmen are proposing to set up a fund where the \$88.00 goes into this fund, and it will be used to purchase additional land for cemetery uses. Moderator Dave Emanuel asked for any questions or comments from the floor, and seeing none, Dave read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and article 14 passed.

Article 15: EMS Training

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Dollars and no cents (\$8950.00) for the purpose of providing EMS training for the members of the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department for the ensuing year, and to further authorize the withdrawal of Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Dollars and no cents (\$8950.00)

from the Stratham Fire Department EMS Special Revenue Fund created for these purposes during the March 17, 2000 Annual Town Meeting and as amended during the March 11, 2005 Town Meeting. No additional funds from general taxation are to be used. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Copeland spoke to the motion. Selectman Copeland stated that the Town of Stratham has an all-volunteer EMS and Fire department. The department needs the continuing education on the medical side and this fund covers that. When there are ambulance calls, the town charges your insurance company if you have insurance. That money comes back into this fund. We also use that money to go towards new ambulances and fire trucks. You approved this fund in 2005, but each year, we do have to ask your permission to use it for further educational training. The bottom line is this will cost the taxpayers nothing. Moderator Dave Emanuel asked for any questions or comments from the floor, and seeing none, Dave read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and article 15 passed.

Article 16: Accrued Benefits Trust Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$20,000.00) to be deposited into the Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund as created by the March 16, 2007 Town Meeting to meet the currently unfunded obligations of the Town. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept the article as read. Selectman David Canada seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke to the motion. Mr. Federico asked to put \$20,000.00 into the fund for retiring employees that may be coming up in the next few years. Moderator Dave Emanuel asked for questions or comments from the floor, and seeing none, Dave read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and article 16 passed.

At this time, Moderator Dave Emanuel was handed the results of the written ballot for article 13. As stated at the end of article 13, article 13 passed. Selectman Canada made a motion to restrict reconsideration on article 10, 11, 12, and 13 and was seconded by Selectman Copeland. The motion was voted on in the affirmative, and the restriction for reconsideration on article 10, 11, 12, and 13 passed.

Article 17: Recycling Facility Participation Program Agreement

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a **Recycling Facility Participation Agreement** with the **Concord Regional Solid Waste /Resource Recovery Cooperative** to make a fifteen (15) year commitment to deliver single stream recyclable materials under the control of the Town pursuant to payment terms and withdrawal rights as negotiated by the Lamprey Regional Cooperative of which the Town of Stratham is a member. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by unanimous vote. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept the article as read. Selectman David Canada seconded the motion. Selectman Copeland deferred to Town Administrator Paul Deschaine for the motion. Mr. Deschaine stated the Town of Stratham along with twelve other towns joined the Lamprey Regional Solid Waste Cooperative in 1978. Lamprey would bring our trash to an incinerator on the campus at UNH. Our trash was brought over there and burned for over 20 years, and it

provided steam to their heating plant at the campus. The practice was discontinued in 1998. Last year, the Board of Directors of the Lamprey Solid Waste Cooperative voted to partner with the Concord Cooperative and to enter into an agreement to construct a single stream solid waste recycling facility. Mr. Deschaine asked, with permission from the Moderator, to have Jim Presher, a non-resident, who is the director of the Concord Regional Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Cooperative to speak to this issue. He has been the director there for nineteen years. He has worked in the municipal government for over thirty-three years, and most recently, he is the Public Works Director for the City of Laconia. Moderator Dave Emanuel asked if there were any objections to Mr. Presher speaking, and seeing no objections, Dave gave his permission for Mr. Presher to address the residents. Mr. Presher explained that with single stream recycling, you will no longer have to separate your recyclables. All of your recyclables; corrugated cardboard, plastics, glass, etc. will go in one container. Some of the benefits for the town if you join this Cooperative are: You would start receiving payment for your recyclables. Right now, the market price could be as high as \$40.00 a ton. This will also reduce your solid waste costs. No capital investment is required. This is the next generation recycling for municipalities. This system will encourage more recycling, and Mr. Presher reiterated that it will reduce your solid waste costs. He then offered to answer any questions. Ron Lawrence, Depot Rd. asked how this fits in with the Northeast Resource Recovery Association, (NRRA). He asked if this is an overlap, as he believes the Town of Stratham belongs to that as well. Mr. Presher answered that they are aware of the new Co-op, and it may be a little bit of an overlap on what the two associations do. Mr. Deschaine did confirm that the town still belongs to the NRRA, and will continue as they process all of our metals at the transfer station. Mr. Deschaine said belonging to both will only enhance the relationship and benefit the town. Bruce Scamman, Greta's Way, asked if this includes all of our solid waste, and what happens after fifteen years? Will we be tied into a contract for fifteen years with someone else setting our rates? Mr. Presher answered that this contract is only for the single stream recyclables, it is not for the trash. The cycle facility members will set the budget on an annual basis. They will have a budget committee, and it will be brought to the entire body to be voted on. Thirty-two communities will establish the tipping or revenue fee. There are also two options to get out of the fifteen year contract, the first one is if it becomes a cost for recycling; if the Co-op is given six months notice, we would be released from the contract. The other option is if the tipping or revenue fee for the recycling portion is ninety percent of the cost, we can opt out of the contract. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. stated we are now paying Bestway to haul our recyclables to Rochester. Now that we will be going to Concord, will this be an added expense going further? Mr. Deschaine responded the relationship that we have with Waste Management via the Lamprey Cooperative is strictly for solid waste. Bestway contracts with Waste Management for their return recovery facilities. Once Bestway picks up our recyclables from the curb, they are now their materials; they get to market them however they like. Stratham gets no return from that. In terms of transportation costs, Bestway would love to go with the single-stream recyclable program, it allows a lot more flexibility for them, and that flexibility will reflect on lower costs when we re-negotiate our contract with them. There have also been discussions with the Town of Hampton. They have a large transfer station and larger trucks. We could possibly use their facilities and truck materials at a much lower cost. Roger Stephenson, Stephen Dr. asked if the revenue from this new recyclable program is intended for the general fund. Selectman Copeland responded in the affirmative. Mr. Stephenson stated that he does support this article. Mr. Presher stated that Hampton has signed up for the single-stream program as well. Moderator Dave Emanuel asked

if there were any more questions or comments from the floor. Seeing none, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and article 17 passed.

Article 18: Heritage Preservation Fund

To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund to be known as the Heritage Preservation Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of preserving historical properties and cultural resources within the Town as authorized under RSA 674:44-b, and to designate the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from this Fund. If this Article fails, then Article 19 is null and void. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Rebecca Mitchell, Portsmouth Ave. moved to accept this article as read. Roger Stephenson, Stephen Dr. seconded the motion. Rebecca spoke to the motion. She introduced herself as the Chairperson for the Heritage Commission. She went on to say that nine years ago, Gordon Barker stood at town meeting, and read from the vision statement of Stratham's Master Plan. The town voted at that time to put five million dollars of bonds for the acquisition of conservation easements. Rebecca stated that we need to put that same kind of vision in the protection of historical resources. The article we are now considering is a step toward that goal of historic resources protected for the use and enjoyment now and in the future. The Selectmen will be designated as agents for this fund. This means no money will come out of this fund without the consent of the selectmen. Money from this fund will support capital project needs for significant structures. This fund would also support relocation within town historic structures threatened with demolition. It could also be used to purchase historic structures for the purpose of resale with preservation easements or some other form of deed restriction in place. Rebecca clarified that there is no plan at this time to purchase any properties. The goal here is to preserve historic properties and keep them in active use, either as their present use or an appropriate adaptive reuse. Rebecca stated if we lose these historic buildings, we lose the ability of understanding how Stratham developed. We lose a lot of interesting stories, the kind of stories that give meaning, diversity, context, and interest to our everyday lives. Rebecca asked us to not create a story of loss, a tale of what used to be. She stated there is a lot of good life left in Stratham's historic buildings; let's do what we can to take care of them. Barbara Broderick, Bunker Hill Ave. commented about all of the changes they have seen in Stratham since they moved here over forty years ago. Barbara stated that she was in favor of this article. Murray Segal, 50 Depot Rd. asked about the cultural resources stated within the question. He asked what the cultural resources are being referred to. Rebecca stated that this is largely an artifact of the RSA 674:44-b, which refers to cultural resources in the same breath as historical resources. The RSA links historical and cultural as one unit. Midori Kobayashi, 8 Hersey Lane asked who designates the resources as historic resources. Rebecca stated that from the 1793 map of Stratham, there were 133 residences listed. We now have 52 still remaining from that map. There are also a variety of standards on what constitutes a historic resource; such as the architectural style, if it contributes to diversity in the town, if it might be the only example of a particular architectural style, if the building techniques also contribute to our understanding of the construction history, or if it is unusual in some way. Another standard that is applied is how intact the building is, and how much of the existing context remains. Roger Stephenson, Stephen Dr. asked if there is a requirement to have a public hearing before any funds are expended. Selectman Copeland answered in the affirmative. Roger stated if the Heritage Preserve Fund was used prudently and judiciously, it would be a benefit to the town. Christian Citarella,

Alderwood Dr. asked if there is already an organization in place, he recalled a church being moved in the eighties. The Heritage Commission has been in existence since 1977, but has largely had no funds or support to be proactive in helping Stratham to preserve its resources. Mr. Citarella asked if any fundraising has been done. Rebecca answered that there should be some will from the town to take responsibility for this. She stated that we will solicit funds, but there should be community support, that this is the way it would be most effective. Mr. Citarella stated he would contribute to such a fund, so he would support article 18 but not article 19. Mr. Deschaine clarified that the Heritage Commission has a small private fund, which is a capital reserve fund, and that fund balance at this time is at \$4137.00. Moderator Dave Emanuel asked if there were any more questions from the floor, and seeing none, he read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and article 18 passed.

Article 19: Funding for Heritage Preservation Fund

By petition of Rebecca Mitchell and 81 other registered voters of the Town of Stratham, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Two Hundred Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$200,000.00) to be deposited in the Capital Reserve Fund created in the previous article, and contingent upon the creation of said Fund. If article 18 fails, this article is null and void. The Board of Selectmen does not recommend this article by a vote of two to one. Nathan Merrill, College Rd. moved this article as read. Lucy Cushman, Winnicutt Rd. seconded the motion. Nathan spoke to the motion. He stated that as a community we take great pride in our investments in our excellent school system, model of our municipal and recreational facilities, and protection of our natural resources. However, we have neglected to take action or pay attention to our historical and cultural resources. The members of the Heritage Commission who initiated this article recognize that times are difficult, but we feel that the time is critical to begin a modest fund for historic preservation efforts. There are several important historic properties along Portsmouth Ave. at risk today, and more will follow. We cannot save everything, but we do want to be able to take proactive rather than reactive steps. Nathan acknowledged that two hundred thousand dollars is a lot of money, but it pales in comparison to our other investments. It will enable us to seek matching grants and private donations to help stretch our municipal dollars. Nathan further stated that it is enough money to begin purchasing some preservation easements on historic structures. We have already lost most of the historic farmsteads and homesteads along Portsmouth Ave. through Bunker Hill south to Exeter. Today we can do something about trying to preserve the ones going in the other direction. Nathan stated he served on the Town Budget Committee where they worked hard with the Board of Selectmen to keep taxes low, but he stated that he fully supports article 19; to raise \$200,000.00 today for the Heritage Preservation Fund. Nathan stated it is a modest and worthy investment in our community's future. Pat Elwell, Strawberry Lane stated that she wanted to thank the Board of Selectmen for separating these articles, and it shows fiscal responsibility on their part. They are putting it back in our hands, to make a decision on whether we support this or not. Pat Elwell endorses this article, and encourages the residents to support this article. She knows that the members of the Heritage Commission will work hard to get matching grants to increase the amount in the fund. Mary Jane Thomas, Wingate Court. introduced herself and added that she is the Planning Board representative on the Heritage Commission. She stated she supports this article, and would like to read a letter from Flossie Wiggin, who is also a member of the Heritage Commission. Flossie would like you to know that she has lived in Stratham for seventy-eight

years, and has seen a lot of changes. However, a lot of our heritage is still here in our old buildings. She has seen a lot destroyed by fire, and although it is hard to save places from fire, we can protect our historic buildings from total loss. She stated that we have to start somewhere. Flossie acknowledged that money is tight for a lot of us, but if the roof leaks, we find a way to fix it. Flossie stated that we need to set this fund up today, before it is too late. Lucy Cushman, Winnicutt Rd. also supports this article. She mentioned how much work Caroline Robinson did in trying to preserve the Parkman House at the end of Stratham Heights Rd. Lucy stated how desperately Caroline worked to save this building, and was unable to do so due to lack of funds. Lucy commented that old houses are important to her, and the Master Plan of Stratham states it is important to our town. Lucy urges everyone to support this article, so these old houses will be here for the future. John Boisvert, Winnicutt Rd., commented that he is one of the 52 people that are fortunate enough to live in a very old house that is from the original map from 1793. John's comment was that these buildings could be used in a very profitable manner yet still preserve them for the historical factor at the same time. He stated there are other things that we can look at, such as how these buildings could be used in the future, and this fund could possibly do that for us. John endorses this article. Cheryl Ewart, Smith Farm Rd. asked why the Selectmen did not recommend it two to one, and asked for their reasons why. Selectman Copeland stated he was one of the two that voted against article 19. He felt he could not endorse \$200,000.00 at this time when he has to ask the town employees to forego raises. Moderator Dave Emanuel then announced seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, we will move the vote. Dave then read the question, the voice vote was close, and Dave asked for a standing vote. The votes were counted by Kevin Peck, and Jerry Howard. The standing vote was 57 Yes and 63 No. Moderator Emanuel announced that article 19 failed.

Article 20: Polling Hours

To see if the town will vote to place the following question on the next state election ballot (Nov 6, 2012):

Polling hours in the Town of Stratham are now 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Shall we place a question on the state election ballot to change polling hours so that polls shall open at 8:00 a.m. and close at 7:00 p.m. for all regular state elections beginning September 9, 2014? The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by unanimous vote. Selectman David Canada moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Mr. Canada stated that this was brought to the Board of Selectmen by our Town Clerk/Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau, and asked to yield the floor to her. Joyce then spoke to the motion. She stated that this article addresses the process the State has put into place to change polling hours. She stated that the reason we are asking for this question to be placed on the ballot is that she and her staff took a very careful look at what the hours currently are, and realized that the hours we have now are in excess of the town's needs. Sometimes changes need to be made, and rather than just keeping things the same year after year, we have decided to start the process of changing the polling hours here in Stratham. Joyce went on to state that they looked at several factors when the discussions started on the polling hours. One factor was the State having the town election officers and their help doing more of the work that the State used to do in the past. At the last State Primary in Sept. of 2010, the town clerks had to manually enter all of the

election results and the write-ins into the State HAVA system. Many town clerks did not get home that night. The State seems to be giving more and more work to the town officials to do. Another factor that was considered was what other towns and cities currently have in place. Out of the 241 towns and cities in NH, 90% close at 7:00 p.m. or earlier, and 76% open at 8:00 a.m. or later. Joyce stated that 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. gives most people ample time to vote, and historically speaking, for most elections, it is very quiet the last hour. However, Joyce stated that she and her staff also wanted to meet the needs of all of our residents. Anyone who is in line at 7:00 p.m. would not be turned away. The Moderator always checks when it is time to close the polls to ensure that there is not anyone in the hallways, or pulling into the parking lot. Another option we give our voters is the absentee ballot. For those that work all day, and cannot get into the polls during the time allocated, we can give the voter an absentee ballot as long as they come in anytime before election day. Joyce also noted that the decision that is being made tonight is just the decision to have this question be placed on the State election ballot in November 2012. She reminded the residents that they were not actually deciding on the polling hours tonight. Everett Lamm, Autumn Lane, asked if there is an absentee ballot available for town elections. Joyce responded that there is an absentee ballot allowed for the town elections, but there is not one allowed at town meeting. He then commented that there are many people in the community who work a fair amount away and it makes it hard that the polls do not open until 8:00 a.m. He then urged people to keep party affiliations and loyalties aside when considering this question. He asked to please allow as many people to participate in the process as possible. Karen Daniel, Winnicutt Rd. also asked about opening the polls at 7:00 a.m. and closing at 7:00 p.m. Moderator Dave Emanuel stated if someone from the floor wanted to change the time, you could make an amendment to change the time for the wording that would appear on the ballot, and this would be the appropriate time to do so. Pat Abrami, Tall Pines, made a motion to amend the article to say 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Moderator Emanuel instructed Mr. Abrami to put his amendment in writing. Howard Altschiller, Apple Way asked Joyce Charbonneau how she would feel about the amendment. Joyce responded that she and her staff are here to serve the residents needs. She stated she would like this question to go forward so a larger population can consider it, but bottom line is we are here to serve you, and if you feel 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. would meet your needs better, then we would certainly say to go ahead and amend the question. Paul Deschaine spoke about how difficult it can be to get ballot clerks at 7:00 a.m. and asked residents to come see Joyce and volunteer to be a ballot clerk at 7:00 a.m. Selectman Federico spoke in favor of the original question. He reinforced how the state is shifting a lot of their work to the towns. Nancy Hunter, Brown Ave. stated she is a ballot clerk, and she will be happy to come in at 7:00 a.m. She supports the amended question. Lucy Cushman, Winnicutt Rd. also stated that she is in support of the amended question. Seeing no further questions from the floor Moderator Emanuel read the amended question, the vote was taken in the affirmative and article 20's amended question passed. The moderator then read the question of article 20 as amended. The vote was taken in the affirmative as well, and article 20, as amended, passed. The question that will go on the next state ballot will be asking the residents if they would like to change the hours from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Article 21: Printing Assessed Values in Town Report

To see if the Town will vote to rescind its prior direction to the Board of Selectmen to print every five (5) years in the annual town report a list of assessed values of all property within the

town, and to authorize instead the Selectmen to post such a list annually on the Town website. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by unanimous vote. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept this article as read. Selectman David Canada seconded this motion. Selectman Copeland spoke to the motion. Selectman Copeland stated what this article is looking to do is to save the Town money. The assessing information that is printed in the Town Report every five years will now go on the Stratham website every year. This will save the Town a lot of money in printing costs. Moderator Dave Emanuel asked for any questions on article 21, and seeing none, Dave read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and article 21 passed.

Article 22: Other Business

To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting. Selectman Canada thanked all the volunteers that we have that help us out around the town. If you are interested in volunteering, we have openings on various boards and you can get an application from our website: www.Strathamnh.gov, or you can just pick one up at the town hall. Selectman Copeland announced that the Conservation Commission will be holding their annual clean up on the morning of Saturday, April 23rd. We would welcome help from individual residents and groups like the boy scouts and girl scouts. It will be held at 9:00 a.m. at the Stratham Hill Park and you will be assigned an area to clean up, given a safety vest, plastic gloves, and a trash bag. The pick up will end around noon followed by a free barbecue at the Park for every one who participates. Selectman Copeland also thanked the Stratham Fire Department for their service each day. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. wanted the record to recognize two long time residents that passed away last year. Barbara Scamman, who was one of the founders of the Ladies Auxillary, and Fred Hutton, Sr. who was a charter member of the Fire Department, and who also served as Chief. Selectman Canada also recognized the Stratham Pocket Gardeners. They are a broad network of volunteers who seek to care for and maintain the current public gardens in town. Anyone interested in joining this group, can sign up by an email to www.stratham-pocketgardeners@comcast.net. He also recognized Melanie McGrail for coordinating this worthwhile group. Selectman Canada also announced to any newly elected officers to come forward after the meeting to be sworn in. Moderator Dave Emanuel entertained a motion to adjourn. A motion was made and seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joyce L. Charbonneau
Town Clerk